

JACKSON (J.D.)

ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

Boyle County Medical Society

OF THE

STATE OF KENTUCKY.

AT ITS

Third Anniversary Meeting,

HELD AT

DANVILLE, KENTUCKY, JANUARY 5, 1869,

BY

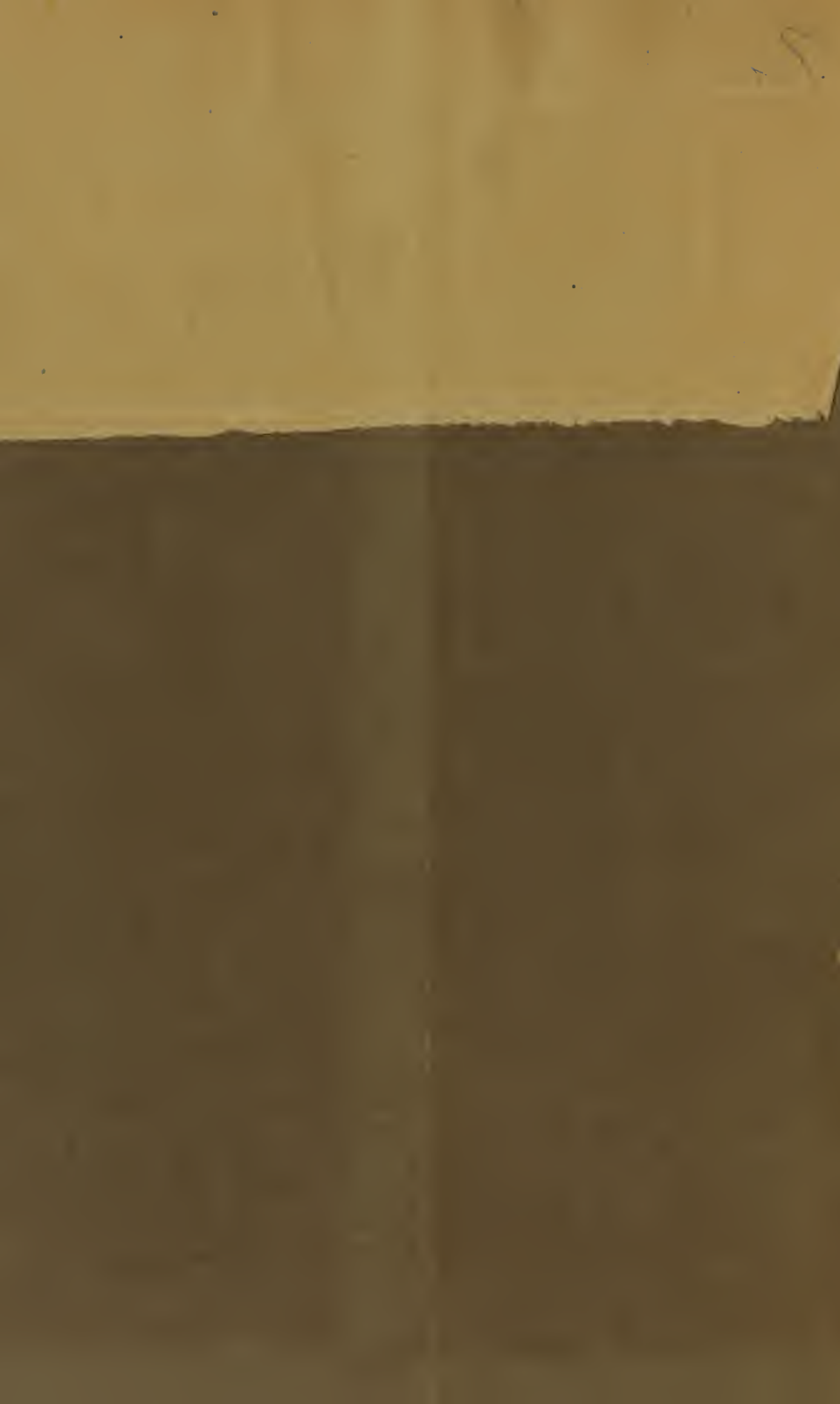
JOHN D. JACKSON, M.D.

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A P P R E S S

BEFORE

THE BOYLE COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

OF THE STATE OF KENTUCKY,

At its Third Anniversary Meeting, held at Danville, January 5th, 1869

BY JOHN D. JACKSON, M. D.

[From the Richmond and Louisville Medical Journal of February, 1869.]

Gentlemen of the Boyle County Medical Society: We meet to-night, on this, the third anniversary of our Society's existence. Three years ago, our association was organized; since then we have met nearly an hundred times, and as often engaged in the discussion of questions pertaining to our profession. Fortnightly, for three years, have we continued to assemble, despite all hindrances, and now, on this triennial anniversary occasion, and especially at this season, so suggestive of reflection—when the old year has died out, and we stand on the threshold of the new one, with its vista of fresh hopes and fair budding promises opening out before us—we may naturally ask, *cui bono*, what profiteth it? Have we, by our organization, advantaged ourselves beyond what would have been were we unorganized? What is our present status compared with our past, and what are our prospects for the future?

These natural questions, so pertinent to the time and the occasion, we stand here to-night, to endeavor to answer.

Sometime since, in conversing with an old friend, a retired member of the profession, living adjacent to a town not a hundred miles from here, we asked him; what tidings of the sons of Æsculapius of your place, and, tell me, especially, whether they have yet organized a society? He replied, "The sons of Æsculapius, as you are pleased to call them, but rather sons of Ishmael, one from my stand-point of vision, would call them, have not, and I assert, never will organize a society." I asked him, why. He replied, that there were so many varying interests and so much discord among the doctors, that, to a looker on, it seemed impossible to ever sufficiently harmonize them to organize a society, founded on mutual concessions, though the object might be for a common benefit.

Upon my asking him to be more explicit, and give me some idea of the state of things, individually, he proceeded in the following strain: "We have some eight or ten doctors in our midst, a sufficient number it is true, to form a society, but, when I tell you, that instead of seeming to be a band of brethren, engaged in a common cause, they seem to feel that they are a band of Ishmaelites, common enemies, every man's hand naturally raised against his neighbor's, you will at once see the foundation upon which I rest my opinion." But, said I, perhaps you judge them too severely, you know that we are all naturally rivals, that most of us are dependent upon our profession for a support, and that what has been called the first law of our nature—*self-preservation*, leads every man to prefer himself to his neighbor. Tell me, said I, what are the rules governing them in their intercourse with one another, upon what grounds do they rely for advancing themselves, or to get practice. Though a rivalry must exist, yet there is such a thing as an honorable, indeed a *generous* rivalry." He then continued: "I believe I am

correct when I say, that no three of the doctors speak. Let a new member of the faculty come to town to settle, and they instantly view him as an interloper, trespassing on their own rightful domains, and treat him accordingly. Wo be unto any of their number who may commit a mistake, or have any evil to befall him in his practice, for he at once becomes common prey for the balance, who look upon the weakness of a rival as so much strength lent to themselves. As to their code or rules governing them in advancing themselves—the prime one seems to be the old primitive one of ‘every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost.’ Another cardinal one, I think, is—‘get practice, honestly if you can, but anyhow, get practice.’ The means adopted to get practice are multitudinous and the perseverance with which they are followed and the astuteness with which they are applied by some, would do honor to any cross-roads’ politician. Marriage, the church, masonry, odd-fellowship, teetotalism, democracy, radicalism, the kuklux klan and the loyal league, are all impressed for aid, and the way in which court days and Saturday evenings are spent in the shaking of hands and *palaver*, a spectator would think the next week an important election was to come off, and the doctor was the candidate for office. Indeed he would sometimes think the vote was surely to take place on Monday, judging from certain scenes on certain church steps on Sundays. To sum up the matter,” said he, “though I blush to tell it, I have heard a doctor, without circumlocution and with unmantled cheek, ask a citizen direct for his patronage.”

These, and some other things, he said of the art of acquiring practice adopted by the physicians of his locality, which I thought would have formed a worthy appendix to the celebrated letter of Mead* to Dr. Timothy Van

* The letter, by the way, was not really written by Mead, but by an enemy of his who fathered it on him.

Bustle on the same subject. Though my friend is rather hypercritical, and withal naturally something of a cynic, and therefore probably drew the scene with rather too heavy a hand, yet we can all recognize some lines which, alas! are but too commonly visible, in any but well-organized communities.

Though in localities in which no organization of the medical body exists, the large number of medical men may act in the true spirit of the profession, and while admitting that if there was no written code, that yet the true physician would carry out its spirit, just as the true gentleman would always be found acting in accordance with the spirit of the civil law, if even it was not the law of the land, yet, just as the necessities of society at large demand organic laws, so, on precisely the same principle, is organization and a written code demanded by every profession. With the clergy, as with the military, it is indeed the fundamental rule of existence.

The truth is, that owing to human depravity, we are all naturally a little mean, and are instinctively predisposed to be a little jealous each of the other. This is, when we analyze it, but an extension of the natural law of *self-preservation* beyond proper limits. Now, I think I may truthfully say, that there is no more effectual way of repressing this evil phase of our nature, in its multifarious disgusting forms, as we see it cropping out within the folds of our profession, than by the accepted public acknowledgment on the part of the better portion of our profession of a written code. Let the public at large once be fully cognizant of our standard, and half the incentives to self-abasement have been taken away; for they, the audience before whom we play our respective parts, can at once measure each of us by our own rules, and the most respectable part of society learns soon to look with disgust upon the tricks of the tradesman in

the professional man. Sir Benjamin Brodie once said that medicine is a most noble profession, but a miserable trade. Fully imbue society with this idea, and any overpushing, grasping desire for the world's patronage, at the expense of honorable independence and the nobler feelings, or at the sacrifice of the rights of others, and the violator will, by the public as by ourselves, be viewed with profound scorn.

The foundation of all pure ethical precepts is in the golden rule "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," and its spirit has ever been breathed into all the established rules for professional intercourse with which we are acquainted. It is infused into the grand old Hippocratic oath of fifty ages ago. It permeates the noble precepts of that prince of surgeons of five hundred years ago, Grey of Chauliac, who summed up the character of the true surgeon by saying that "He should be courteous and condescending, bold in security, cautious in time of danger, avoiding impracticabilities, compassionate to the infirm, benevolent to his associates, circumspect in prognostication, chaste, sober, pious and merciful, not greedy of gain, no extortioner, but looking for his fee in moderation, according to the extent of his services, the ability of his patient, the result of his treatment, and a proper sense of his own dignity." And now, in our own Code of Ethics, as written by the ever-to-be-honored Percival, and adopted by the American Medical Association, we have as perfect a system of rules for our government, founded on as pure a system of morality as the most rigid moralist could ever wish for—a code which, from its essential nature, must always purify and ennoble those living in accordance with its precepts.

How men of our profession, of good sense and good intentions, can ever live and practice their vocation in the same community without being on good terms with each

other, is not easily explicable; for there is certainly no other profession the inherent nature of the practice of which so inevitably and so repeatedly demands coöperation, and mutual kindly services. As has been said by one of eminence in our profession: "If society does treat the medical man harshly and unkindly, is it any worse than medical men treat each other? Many of the worst things ever said of a physician, originally came from another physician's tongue; society is often merely the whispering gallery, which echoes back these utterances. Were we more charitable toward each other, we would silence half the reproaches which are brought upon the profession."* It would always be well for that man who should be ready to rejoice at the mishaps of his neighbor, and dishonorably profit by his misfortunes, to reflect that, being human, we are all thereby fallible, and that the day may not be far distant when he himself may stand in sore need of, and most wistfully crave, all human sympathy; and, furthermore, that he who does injustice to one of his peers, directly wounds his profession, and, reflectively, himself.

How different was the noble conduct of Dr. Mead! He and Dr. Friend were at the head of the profession in London, and were rivals in practice, as well as opposed to each other in politics—Mead being a Whig, and possessing great influence with the heads of the party then in power, while the latter was a Tory, and member of Parliament for Lancaster. Dr. Friend, being suspected of some connection with the Atterbury plot, was arrested and committed to the Tower, where he was confined for nearly a half year. Mead was about this time called to attend Sir Robert Walpole, and during his professional attendance, pleaded so eloquently with the Prime Minister as to effect Dr. Friend's discharge on bail, he himself be-

* Dr. Theophilus Parvin.

coming one of his sureties. Not only this, but he took Friend aside, after his release, and presented him with a purse containing 2000 guineas, the sum of all the fees he had received from the patients of his Jacobite rival during his imprisonment, enforcing its acceptance by saying: "I cannot profit by the misfortunes of a rival." What a worthy example of magnanimity was the course of Dr. Paul F. Eve, who, appointed Professor of Surgery in the University of Louisville on Dr. Gross' leaving the chair to occupy a similar position in New York, when the latter returned to Louisville, after a year or two, at once resigned, telling the trustees to reappoint Dr. Gross—that he was the ablest man for the position to be found in the West, and that the honor of the school and the good of the profession demanded his reappointment!

The practice of our profession in the proper spirit, tends, of its very self, to ennoble us, and this tribute was paid to medicine more than a thousand years ago, by no less a personage than Cicero, when he said, "*Homines ad Deos nulla re proprius accedunt, quam salutem hominibus dando.*"

But, as the organization of individuals into communities is greatly auxiliary to individual effort, whether it be for the furtherance of material interests, or the practice of the moral virtues, so is our profession benefited by the formation of Societies. Certainly one of the most powerful levers impelling the advance of medical science during the past half century, has been the establishment of the numerous medical Societies which during that time have grown up in the capital towns of Europe.

Before these, every alleged discovery with any pretensions to importance, is brought up, and undergoes the ordeal of scientific discussion by the ablest minds of our profession. Before these, a thousand pretentious theories which would have lived sometime in the world, have

promptly received their quietus; and it has been, on the other hand, through its ventilation here, that many an opinion or method which would otherwise have been very slow of development, has at once obtained its proper standing with the profession. The great medical Societies of the world are the winnowing machines of the profession, serving the most useful purpose of sifting the good from the bad, the true from the false. Let the Academy of Medicine, or the Imperial Academy of Surgery, of Paris, alone be blotted out to-day, and the loss would soon be sensibly felt by the profession throughout the world.

Is there a member of the Boyle County Medical Society present to-night, but will agree with me in affirming that, as an individual practitioner, he has been instructed and elevated morally as well as mentally from our united association? And, furthermore, I believe I speak the truth when I say, that as the result of the Society's organization and operations, our profession as a body, and as a consequence, we, as individual practitioners, have been elevated an hundred per cent. in the eyes of this community in whose midst we belong.

These may be mentioned, not in the spirit of egotism, but for self-encouragement, and to demonstrate the claim that our organization has not been in vain--the effects of our Society abroad. I believe that the profession throughout the State, who are informed as to the history of the reorganization of the Kentucky State Medical Society, with one accord give the credit of its revival to us, and certainly that the plan of its resurrection originated here. I am aware of three Societies within the State, which, encouraged by our example, have been organized, adopting in the main, the constitution, by-laws, and form of business governing this body, and I have reason to believe that more than one other association antedating us in age,

has been awakened from its state of suspended animation and had new vitality infused into it, by the example of our prosperity.

What, gentlemen, are our prospects for the future? Has our society reached its acmé of efficiency, and is it unreasonable to expect the fruits of the year just before us to excel the products of the one just ended?

While acknowledging that our *organization*, simple as it is, is yet remarkably well adapted for effecting its object, and while I think I can say without reflecting egotism, that we have done well in the past, yet truth demands that I should say that there yet remains a wide margin for improvement.

Wherein we are yet lacking, and the direction in which I think improvement can be effected, it becomes my duty to endeavor to point out.

It has been justly said by an eminent observer in our profession, "A very large class enter the learned professions with no higher motives than such as characterize commercial enterprises, pursuing them as a business, and more anxious to erect monuments like that of Nebuchadnezzar in the plain of Dura, than such as fill the niches of fame."*

" Make sordid wealth the object and sole end
Of their industrious aims."

But, gentlemen, though we know that while we have our own, with perhaps many other hungry mouths to fill, we must ever instinctively feel, that to derive an income from our professional labors must be one of our first objects—an object the worthiness of which we have sanctioned by the inspired authority, which tells us that "he who provideth not for his household is worse than an infidel"—yet we should never forget that we have it from the same authority, that "man shall not live by bread alone."

* Dr. D. Hayes Agnew.

Dr. George B. Wood once declared that "He who enters the medical profession with a mercenary spirit, will almost necessarily come short of its highest requirements. Aiming at the appearance, rather than the reality of skill, he will think more of the impression he may make on others, than of a proper understanding and treatment of the disease. When nothing is to be gained but the consciousness of duty fulfilled, he will be little apt to spend time and labor which might yield him more if applied elsewhere, or at least would be abstracted from his pleasures. For the frequent self-denial, the steady devotion of thought and energy, the unwavering guard over his precious charge, as well when unseen as when seen of men, which characterize the right spirited practitioner, he has no sufficient inducement. He will be, almost necessarily, more or less superficial. He never can be the true model physician. Just in proportion as medicine is cultivated in the mercenary, or in the pure professional spirit, will be its decay or advancement in efficiency, zeal, dignity and acceptance with God and man. * * Get the true professional spirit, and all that is needful or desirable will be added unto it."

The English Hippocrates, Sydenham, used to say: "I have thought it a greater happiness to discover a certain method of curing the slightest disease, than to accumulate the largest fortune." And the illustrious Dr. Fothergill once said: "My only wish was to do what little business might fall to my share as well as possible, and to banish all thoughts of practicing physic as a money-getting trade, with the same solicitude as I would the suggestions of vice or intemperance. * * * I endeavor to follow my business because it is my duty, rather than my interest; *the last is inseparable from a just discharge of duty.*"

Lord Bacon has said "that every man is a debtor to his profession, from the which, as men do of course seek

to receive countenance and profit, so ought they of duty to endeavor themselves, by way of amends, to be a help and ornament thereunto." Our code makes the same acknowledgement in the paragraph which declares that "Every individual, on entering the profession, as he becomes thereby entitled to all its privileges and immunities, incurs an obligation to the extent of his best abilities to maintain its dignity and honor, to exalt its standing, and to extend the bounds of its usefulness;" and further on enjoins that he "should, by unwearied diligence, resort to every honorable means of enriching the science."

Now, gentlemen, let us ask ourselves the question direct, and let each answer it honestly for himself, whether during the year just closed, he thinks he has been perfectly imbued with the "pure professional spirit," or whether he does not think we all yet have rather too much of the "mercenary sort." Have we always attended our society meetings, when it was possible? Have we always prepared ourselves as thoroughly as we could for our debates? Have we always done what we could in the way of prepared papers, and written records of cases to be read before our society? Have we, in every instance possible, demanded and held a *post mortem*, when we had a fatal case? Have we taken advantage of the opportunities we have had of cultivating anatomical science, the very groundwork of our profession? Have we all kept case books, and carefully recorded the progress and results of each case in our practice? Have we kept as many journals on our tables as we could afford to take and had time to read, and purchased every new work, the perusal of which was necessary to keep us abreast in the present rapid march of our profession? Have we provided ourselves with all instruments which the exigencies of our profession and the urgency of certain cases which are liable to fall into our hands at any day, will not give us

time to send abroad for, when the occasion arises for their use, and the want of which, under certain circumstances, might make us morally criminal, on the death of a fellow-being? And have we always kept ourselves so pure and unspotted from the world of quackery that, by a refusal of private social recognition of its practitioners, we take away from the public all occasion of confounding them with us? To make application of an expression of St. Paul, "Have we all done what we could to *magnify* our profession?"

But methinks I hear some one present say, We have no time for most of these things; the toils of our practice, and the domestic duties—with those of us having families—so engross our time as to leave us insufficient leisure for the cultivation of medicine as a science. Besides, some of us are growing old, and we must leave everything of that sort to the younger generation, following after.

But I would ask any so objecting, to think for a few moments, and tell me, if he can, of any great work which we acknowledge as of much authority in our profession, which has not been prepared amid just such, or more onerous duties than any by which the busiest of us is now harassed. Let him reflect that some of the most valuable of all the works for which to-day our profession is indebted to Sir Astley Cooper, were composed in the midst of one of the largest private practices of any man who ever lived, and at the time, too, when he was an hospital surgeon, and daily lecturer in a medical school. Let him look at those eighteen volumes of Gerard Van Swieten's "Commentaries on Boerhaave," the great text-book of the medical world a century ago, and recollect that they were written by the court physician of Joseph II, in the midst of one of the heaviest and most responsible of private practices, and that he still found time to orig-

inate a medical school, give clinical lectures, create a botanical garden, and to exert his influence sufficiently to found a university. Let him read the lives of Boerhaave and Haller and Hoffman, the bare titles of the latter of whose works fill thirty-eight quarto pages, and see if they had learned leisure in which to do nothing else than write. Does not every one know that Hippocrates, the father of medicine, wrote those immortal records which all acknowledge as the foundation of our science while engaged in what must have been almost constant practical professional engagements. Or let him come down to the present year and hour, and know that the living, shining lights of our own day and generation, are also the busiest privately occupied. Let him know that Sir Thomas Watson, and George B. Wood, and Austin Flint, and Sir William Ferguson, and Erichsen, and Gross, and Sir James Y. Simpson, and Hodge, and Meigs, each wrote the works which we, and generations after us shall be indebted to them for, while busier than the busiest of us in this presence. No, gentlemen, when we recollect that Dr. John Mason Good found time to translate Lucretius' "*De Natura Rerum*," with his book in hand as he drove or walked his daily rounds, engaged in one of the largest practices in London; and when we read in the preface to Dr. Willis' *Biography of Harvey*, together with a complete translation of his works from the Latin, what he says in speaking of the biographical part: "This portion of my work I have only achieved with an effort, and at something like disadvantage. Incessantly engaged by night and by day in the laborious and responsible duties of a country practice, enjoying nothing of learned leisure, but snatching from the hours that should rightfully be given to rest, the time that was necessary to composition, remote, too, from means of information which I must nevertheless send for and consult"—recalling these, and

an hundred similar examples if we might, for one, I think that there is not one of us but should feel humiliated when reflecting on our wasted time, time which we have let slip from us, never, nevermore to be repossessed.

But, I imagine I again hear it objected, that we are but unpretentious country doctors, not aspiring to lead the profession, and even if we were all aflame with ambitious hopes to do so, that our narrow sphere would make their realization an impossibility, that the village doctor, must from the very nature of things, ever be the passive follower of the hospital physician of the city.

But, I would answer, gentlemen, that this is not the point. I am not speaking of ambition, though if we each had a little more of it in us, it would probably be better for ourselves and our patients; the question is one regarding the fulfillment of that injunction of that code which says that we are morally bound to exalt the standing of our profession, and by "unwearied diligence, resort to every honorable means of enriching the science." Because the hospital presents a wider and more easily cultivated field than ours, does it follow that ours must be totally barren? No, the material in each case is just the same, poor suffering humanity, and while the concentration of large numbers of sick within a small space, and the regulations of hospitals, are such that the observer can study disease more readily, have his directions carried out more effectually, and record and tabulate the results more easily, yet the antecedents, the surroundings, and the very concentration of patients within eleemosynary institutions, are so different from those of the patients of private life, that the uncorrected conclusions of experience drawn from the former source alone, are not perfectly applicable in every respect to those whom we attend.

I cannot recollect any evidence that either Hippocrates

or Sydenham, was ever connected with a hospital, and it would be well for those who would despise our narrow sphere, to recall the fact, that the greatest boon which our profession has yet conferred upon humanity (vaccination), came at the hands of a modest country physician, who made his daily rounds just as we are doing; and let him also know, that the physician of America now, receiving the most honors at home and in Europe, is doing so because of an operation conceived, executed and perfected, while laboring in precisely the same character of field as our own. Why, gentlemen, an operation which has made the name of its originator famous throughout the world, and will send it down honored to coming generations, an operation by which thousands of lovely women have been, and many more shall be rescued from otherwise inevitable death, was first planned and performed right here in this our own little field.

Let us all use the opportunities at command, to the extent of our abilities, and although our Society may never be honored by one to whom the world shall owe so much as it does to a Jenner, a Sims, or a McDowell, yet of one thing we may feel assured, that we will all become better practitioners, and our patients, to whom we shall be called to administer, be proportionally benefitted.

The plain truth is, that those who intrust themselves to our care, have the right to require of us a knowledge of our profession fully up to the advances of the day, and for the lack of the possession of such knowledge, involving human life and health as it does, we stand responsible before God and in the presence of the law. Ours is not an exact science, but is making regular and rapid progress toward a position in which it may be ranked with the fixed sciences. While this rapid march continues, to cease to advance is to retrograde, and the day the practitioner of medicine ceases to be a student,

that day should see him, if a conscientious man, ready to retire from the ranks of the profession. Unremitting study and labor will ever constitute our only reliable motive power, so long as we continue members of that great army, in the interests of medical science, warring with disease.

In the introduction to one of his anatomico-physiological treatises, Galen calls his work "A Hymn to the Deity," declaring that, to his mind, such an offering was more acceptable in the eyes of the gods, than the sacrifices of whole hecatombs of oxen, or incense from the most costly perfumes. Galen was but a pagan, yet the spirit of his language, was worthy of these most Christian times, since every effort properly directed toward the improvement of medicine, tends to alleviate the sufferings of our race. I believe the true physician can, of all men, most truly say—"laborare est orare."

If we believe in the sentiment, there is one resolve which I think we should make in common here to-night, that we should each of us keep a *case book* and in it faithfully record the phenomena, treatment and results of every case of any importance falling to our lot during the present year. The keeping of an intelligible and conscientious record, must necessarily improve every individual keeping it, but let a dozen men in country practice each keep one and the combined experience is about equivalent to a large ward in a hospital. Should the members of every country district in the State, keep accurate records, for the next three years, there would be data of the most valuable character, and such as our profession stands greatly in need of, data from which the statistics of modern country practice separate from hospital practice could reliably be made out. Let us keep accurate records of our practice, and we will gradually lose a phase in our debates which has been entirely too

familiar with us, and one which does not look well in a scientific body, when seen too often. I allude to the common expression of opinion, without a reason for the faith in us, and which is a frequent source of controversy without practical benefit; *c. g.*—Dr. A. says that he thinks a certain disease less common than formerly, while Dr. B. arises and declares that he thinks it more common, to be followed by Dr. C., who probably thinks it about as common as it has always been. Or, let the question be one regarding the presence of certain phenomena in disease, or the results of the administration of a certain remedy, and it is the same thing. But if we could all draw upon the *written records* of our experience, instead of our unconfirmed recollections, which are too often but “vain imaginings,” our opinions would be more nearly demonstrable. “*Litera scripta manet.*” We should not forget that simple opinions are not experience, let them be asserted ever so boldly, but that, as Liston has said, “The greatest number of well-assorted facts, on a particular subject, constitutes experience, whether these facts have been culled in five years or fifty.”

Next in importance with us to the subject just under discussion is, I think, *the making of post-mortems and anatomical dissections.*

The first has always been deemed necessary to the intelligent practice of our profession, and absolutely essential to the advancement of medicine toward a perfect science. Without it, nearly one-half the fruits of what we are accustomed to call experience is lost; for otherwise we have no means of confirming the correctness, or correcting the errors of judgment, regarding pathological conditions supposed to exist during life, and toward which our therapeutics have been directed. It is true, that I have sometimes heard it objected, that practitioners in the country are so accustomed to examining the dead, that

when they ever do so, their opinions are worth but little from their inability to clearly discern and distinguish normal from abnormal appearances. But this is the most futile of objections, being, indeed, one of the strongest arguments in behalf of their being more frequently held. It has been remarked that one of the most correct indices of the true standing of our profession in any locality is the frequency of *post-mortems*.

As to the latter—*practical anatomy*—I don't know that I can adduce any arguments, or the opinions of any, entitled to more authority concerning the necessity of its cultivation by us, than have been adduced by Sir Astley Cooper and Sir Benjamin Brodie. The former has said: "Let it always be remembered, that operations cannot be *safely* undertaken by any man, without his possessing a thorough knowledge of anatomy. This is the real groundwork of all surgical science. It has ever been found that half anatomists are bungling practitioners; ignorance here, as it always does, gives confidence without power. * *

* With us the march of improvement has been most rapid; and it has principally arisen from the assiduity with which the modern surgeons have pursued their dissecting-room avocations." The latter, when once conversing in private with a young American who had just taken his degree in medicine, said: "If you wish, my young friend, to give breadth to your medical conceptions and confidence to your hand, if you wish, indeed, to make yourself a great surgeon, let me say to you, as I would to all with whom I have influence, never for a moment cease the cultivation of anatomical science." Now it will not do to excuse ourselves by saying that, being country doctors, we make no special pretensions to surgery, and that the remarks quoted were intended to apply alone to those practicing surgery purely, and that when a surgical operation is necessary, they are the ones to whom

we send our patients for its performance. The truth is that the advice is in a great measure as applicable to the pure physician as to the surgeon ; and, furthermore, the accomplishments demanded at the hands of practitioners in the country are really much greater than those of the city practitioner, who can devote himself to medicine alone, or to surgery exclusively. For we, from the nature of our situation, must be physicians, surgeons and obstetricians—all. I admit that it is true that in probably the majority of our cases we can send our patients with surgical affections abroad for operations, but we must recollect, gentlemen, that in many instances we cannot. Every country doctor must be his own bleeder, cupper and leecher ; every country doctor is in any hour liable to be called upon to reduce a dislocation, or amputate a mangled member, or set a fracture, or trephine, or operate for inguinal or femoral hernia, or perform tracheotomy, or extract a bullet, or cut down upon and take up an artery—operations sometimes requiring no little degree of anatomical knowledge, and which make the operator sigh for an opportunity of resorting to the cadaver to revive his recollections. I am ready to admit that the difficulties and dangers of dissection are not small, to say nothing of its disagreeableness, and that we are placed in the very unpleasant and anomalous condition of being compelled to be law-breakers to enable ourselves to obey the law ; but I think that it has already been satisfactorily demonstrated that the good sense of this community, and its respect for our profession, are such that we have no just grounds for fearing outside interference with dissections, when made with discretion, as, indeed, they always should be. “ *We must dissect the dead, or mangle the living.*”

What shall I say of the hated monster Quackery, which

like a hideous hydra-headed shadow, ever stalks abroad accompanying our profession? As the louse, the flea, and tick are the constant companions of the canine tribe, so it would seem the body-politic is destined always to be preyed upon by the quack. Though the crop of medicasters, charlatans, quacksalvers, nostrum-mountebanks, liniment-rubbers, wind-pumpers, electric-humbuggers, *et id omne genus*, has been as plentiful as usual during the past three years, yet I don't think they have flourished in this vicinity, as much as was their wont in former days.

One prime source of the evil rests in the bosom of our own profession, for as has been said by another: "The quackery which is practiced among medical men is a much greater evil than that which is abroad in the community. When the rules of an honorable professional intercourse shall come to be understood by the public, as well also as many of the tricks and manœuvres which are employed by those physicians who, pursuing medicine as a *trade* instead of a profession, study the science of patient-getting, to the neglect of the science of patient-curing, one of the great sources of the success of quackery will be removed."* Let us see to it that our own escutcheon shall be kept clean, if we wish to avoid all danger of its being confounded with the dirty banner of the enemy. As I once heard a very eloquent divine say, in a revival sermon, from the pulpit: "If we had but a revival within the fold of the church, a great and blessed revival indeed would it be." So might we paraphrase him and declare that if the profession proper, were perfectly purged of quackery, what a riddance there would be. In proportion to the high and trusted stand, which our profession takes in a community as a scientific and ethical body, is the

* Dr. Worthington Hooker.

difficulty of quackery's obtaining a foothold, but when torn by dissensions among ourselves, chaos prepares a rich field for its prolific growth.

Our code declares it to be our duty as "physicians who are frequent witnesses of the enormities committed by quackery, and the injury to health, and even destruction of life, caused by the use of quack medicines, to enlighten the public on these subjects, and to expose the injuries sustained by the unwary from the devices and pretensions of artful empirics and impostors." To this end, I think that it is the duty of each of us, on every proper occasion, to endeavor to reason and explain away the prejudices and misconceptions of the more intelligent portion of society, for it is this part after all which furnishes the main pillar of its support. I think that not infrequently the mistake is made of treating the subject with some simple ejaculation of contempt, which proves ineffectual, when if we took the trouble of reasoning a little with those who are intelligent and honest, though misinformed, our efforts to eradicate error would more frequently prove successful. As showing the standard by which we would have our profession judged, and thus combat the wrong by showing the right, I think that a very great deal of good has been accomplished for this community, by our recent publication* of the Code of Ethics. I have now this suggestion to make to the Society, viz: That for the purpose of impressing the public more thoroughly on this point, we raise a fund for the purpose of inserting in the columns of our village paper for the ensuing year sections 3 and 4 of art. 1, chap. 2 of the code, which reads :

"§ 3. It is derogatory to the dignity of the profession, to resort to public advertisements or private cards or

* In the village paper.

“handbills, inviting the attention of individuals affected
“with particular diseases, publicly offering advice and
“medicine to the poor gratis, or promising radical cures;
“or to publish cases and operations in the daily prints, or
“suffer such publication to be made; to invite laymen to
“be present at operations; to boast of cures and remedies;
“to adduce certificates of skill and success, or to
“perform any other similar acts. These are the ordinary
“practices of empirics, and are highly reprehensible
“in a regular physician.

“§ 4. Equally derogatory to professional character is it
“for a physician to hold a patent for any surgical instrument,
“or medicine; or to dispense a secret *nostrum*,
“whether it be the composition or exclusive property of
“himself or of others. For if such nostrums be of real
“efficacy, any concealment regarding it is inconsistent
“with beneficence and professional liberality; and if
“mystery alone give it value and importance, such craft
“implies either disgraceful ignorance or fraudulent avarice.
“It is also reprehensible for physicians to give
“certificates attesting the efficacy of patent or secret
“medicines, or in any way to promote the use of them.”

This card, properly quoted, as an abstract from the code of the regular profession, to be inserted immediately above or below such flaming advertisements as we now weekly see, and as are constantly making their appearance throughout the year, I doubt not, would effect good by making the public hesitate and ponder well before resorting to traveling charlatans.

If legislation could be brought properly to bear upon the evil, much would be done toward its repression. With this object in view, one of our legislators has promised, during the coming session, to introduce a bill into the Legislature similar to the medical act recently passed in the neighboring State of Ohio.

In conclusion, gentlemen, we ought always to remember that "of unity cometh strength;" and that, as whatever of individual honors come to us are reflected upon our Society, so as individual members composing the Society, whatever of honors or glory cometh to her is reflected back upon us. Let us never forget that the preamble of our constitution declares a prime object of this organization to be "the cultivation of amity among us;" recalling which, let us foster toleration, charity, forbearance, the spirit of forgiveness, and all the kindlier feelings, which I think, considering everything, have pre-eminently characterized our association in the past; and, as greatly promotive of this end, I would suggest that we meet more frequently around the social board.

And now, may I say, in the name of every member here present to-night, that whatever of joy or sorrow the future may bring to us, nerved to a triple resolve by the recollections of the three years just expired, may the coming three always find us true and worthy worshipers at the altar of science, ever lending the best powers of head, heart and hand toward adorning and keeping clean the little niche in the great Temple of Medicine which has fallen to the lot of the Boyle County Medical Society.

ERRATA.—On page 5, sixteenth line, read “Guy” instead of “Grey;” page 6, lines 23, 28 and 34, read “Freind” instead of “Friend;” same page, line 28, read “Launceston” instead of “Lancaster;” page 7, line 2, read “Freind” instead of “Friend;” same page, line 3, read “5000” instead of “2000;” page 8, line 23, read “There” instead of “These;” page 12, line 24, read “minister” instead of “administer;” same page and line, read “proportionately” instead of “proportionally.”

